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Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Letter dated 19 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement from the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation to the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 43.

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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Statement from the State Duma to the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba

In the coming days, the United Nations General Assembly will once again voice its opinion about the embargo imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba. More than 55 years have elapsed since this form of economic and political pressure was applied to this sovereign State. In contrast to the position of the majority of States Members of the United Nations, the United States of America continues to harbour a Cold War mentality and to intervene in the internal affairs of an independent State in order to change the political regime.

The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations establishes the inalienable right of a State to choose its political, economic, social and cultural systems. This right is persistently ignored and violated by the United States. The embargo imposed on Cuba is deeply detrimental to the socioeconomic development of Cuba and incompatible with the universally accepted principles and norms of international law.

The State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation protests the attempts of the United States to pursue a policy of hegemony and expansion against Cuba, systematically violating such principles of international law as non-interference in internal affairs, the sovereign equality of States, the equal rights and self-determination of peoples and the freedom of international trade and navigation, as established by United Nations instruments.

The pressure exerted by the United States of America on the Republic of Cuba adversely affects the development of its economy and social sphere and infringes on the rights and interests of Cuban citizens and States wishing to cooperate with Cuba. The country's population is deprived of medicine and essential items. All of this has a negative impact on the standard of living of the Cuban people and is damaging to their health and well-being.

During the period in which the embargo has been in place, a large number of statements and resolutions expressing opposition to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba have been adopted by international forums, Governments and civic associations. The deputies of the State Duma welcome the aspiration of the world's people to swiftly normalize Cuba-United States relations and are convinced that the United States should embrace the position taken by the international community, abandon its use of global diktats and unilateral pressure and respect the norms of international law.

Unfortunately, the international community's hopes that the United States of America would change its position on this matter have been dashed. Throughout 2017, the United States adopted ever harsher policies towards Cuba. The President of the United States and the Departments of State, the Treasury and Commerce imposed additional restrictions on the business sector, which was ready to develop ties with Cuba, and on citizens intending to visit Cuba.

The State Duma condemns the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and opposes the flawed policy of unilateral

sanctions, which it regards as one of the factors destabilizing the global political situation and impeding open collaboration and cooperation among States. The deputies of the State Duma believe that the United States of America should reconsider its policy directed against the interests of the Cuban people.

Despite the embargo, the Cuban people have demonstrated their readiness to defend freedom in their homeland. In overcoming all deprivations, they have shown that they can actively withstand any external pressure.

The deputies of the State Duma note that Russia is keen to maintain and develop Russian-Cuban relations on a friendly and mutually beneficial basis and advocate strengthening long-standing economic cooperation with Cuba.

The State Duma calls on the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations to influence the United States of America to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba. It also invites all States to combine their efforts and take practical steps to develop economic, political, scientific and humanitarian cooperation with Cuba bilaterally and multilaterally at the intergovernmental, inter-parliamentary and inter-party levels and through public engagement.

V. V. **Volodin**
Chair of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation